

This Public Advisory is a joint publication of the
Nassau County Police Department
and the Nassau County Office
for the Physically Challenged



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**Public
Advisory**
205.4

CRIME PREVENTION

FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



**ABOUT YOUR SAFETY
AT HOME AND AWAY**



CRIME PREVENTION

HOW TO BE YOUR OWN ADVOCATE

- Join or help organize a “Neighborhood Watch” group; make sure the meeting sites are accessible to people with disabilities.
- Work with rehabilitation centers and advocacy groups to offer presentations to schools and community organizations on this topic.
- Write to your local elected representatives to update them regarding your efforts and to encourage their support.
- Contact local support groups that provide assistance for your particular disability.



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BASIC CRIME PREVENTION

- Be aware of your surroundings, especially those familiar to you.
- Arrange for shopping trips with family/friends.
- If you drive, make sure your vehicle is in good operating condition. Give special attention to assistive driving devices.
- Carry an emergency road kit and distress flag in your vehicle.
- Stay alert when waiting for or when riding on public transportation.
- Appear calm and confident on your way to your destination.
- Be realistic about your limitations; avoid places or situations that put you at risk.



Avoid places or situations that put you at risk.

BASIC CRIME PREVENTION (cont'd)

- Get to know your neighbors and your neighborhood. Learn the location of police and fire stations, public phones, hospitals, restaurants or stores that are open and accessible in the event of an emergency.
- Vary your daily routines, especially when banking.
- Stay on well-lit and well-traveled streets.
- Do not take shortcuts through vacant lots, wooded areas, parking lots or alleys.
- Carry your purse close to your body – not dangling by the strap. Put your wallet in an inside coat or front pants pocket.
- If you use a wheelchair, keep your purse or wallet tucked snugly between you and the inside of the chair.
- If you use a knapsack, close it securely.
- Carry your medical information at all times.
- If you drive, be aware of your location (towns, streets, cross streets, addresses, etc.).
- Keep a cell phone available for emergency situations. Be ready to tell 911 operators your location.



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CRIME PREVENTION CONCERNING CON ARTISTS

Con artists prey on people's desires to find miracle cures for chronic conditions and fatal diseases, or to make quick cash.

Remember that...

- If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- Greed and excitement overcome common sense. Wait at least 24 hours and consult a trusted friend or lawyer before making decisions.
- You should be wary of high-pressure tactics:
 - The need for quick decisions;*
 - Demands for cash only;*
 - High-yield / low-risk investments;*
 - Fast and confusing talkers.*
- Take the safe approach: do not do business with anyone who approaches you first including unsolicited sales calls. When in doubt, hang up!
- Never reveal that you have a disability.



If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

CRIME PREVENTION WHILE ON VACATION (cont'd)

- Have owners manual and small basic tools available to repair assistive devices on the road
- During hotel check-in, keep your luggage in view.
- If traveling alone, have the porter check your room prior to your entering.
- Only use hotel's main entrance. Be aware of your surroundings in parking lots.
- Always check windows and adjoining room doors each time you enter the room.
- Use bolt, chain and any other locking devices provided when you are in the room.

***Stay near other
passengers.
Sit by the driver, if
possible.***



CRIME PREVENTION WHILE TAKING PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

- Use only well-lit, busy stops.
- Stay near other passengers. Sit by the driver or near an emergency exit, if possible.
- Take note of emergency exits.
- Stay alert! Do not doze or daydream.
- If someone harasses you, make a loud noise, say, "Leave me alone," or hit the emergency signal.

CRIME PREVENTION WHILE AT HOME

- Install deadbolts on exterior doors; the bolts should extend at least one inch into the door frame. Locks should easily open from inside for emergencies.
- Install peepholes at your eye level (standing or in wheelchair) in solid construction front and back doors.
- Keep ground floor/first floor windows closed or use window pins to adjust opening.
- Ensure that window type air conditioning units are properly secured.
- If you have a home alarm system, use it whenever you are home.
- Carry a cordless phone (as opposed to a cell phone) when outside your house. 911 operators identify your location when you use your home phone.

- Get to know your neighbors. Watchful neighbors are a frontline defense against crime.



***Ask your police
department to
conduct a free
home security
survey to
identify your
individual needs.***

CRIME PREVENTION

WHILE AT HOME *(cont'd)*

- If you live alone, create a buddy system and check on each other daily.
- If you have difficulty speaking, have a friend record a message to use in emergencies. Include your name, address, and type of disability. Keep the tape in a recorder next to your phone.
- Females should use male voice on answering machines/voice mail or the preset message.
- Ask your local police department to conduct a free home security survey to identify your individual needs.
- Report suspicious persons/activities to 911.



***Install deadbolts
on exterior doors:
Locks should easily open
from inside for emergencies.***



If you have an alarm system use it when you are at home.

CRIME PREVENTION

WHILE ON VACATION

- If possible, plan your vacations to include friends or family.
- If traveling by car, get maps and plan your route.
- Have your car and any assistive devices checked by a mechanic or by a knowledgeable friend.
- Have your car checked by a mechanic or by a knowledgeable friend.
- Give a trustworthy friend, neighbor, or family member your full contact information, and where you can be reached in an emergency.
- Put house lights and radio on timers and leave window treatments in normal positions to create the illusion that someone is home. The house should be secure and look lived-in.
- Stop postal mail and deliveries or ask a neighbor to take them in.
- Tell someone - a neighbor, family member or friend - the location and time you plan to leave and return.
- Carry important medical information. If traveling to a foreign country have this information translated to the appropriate language

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